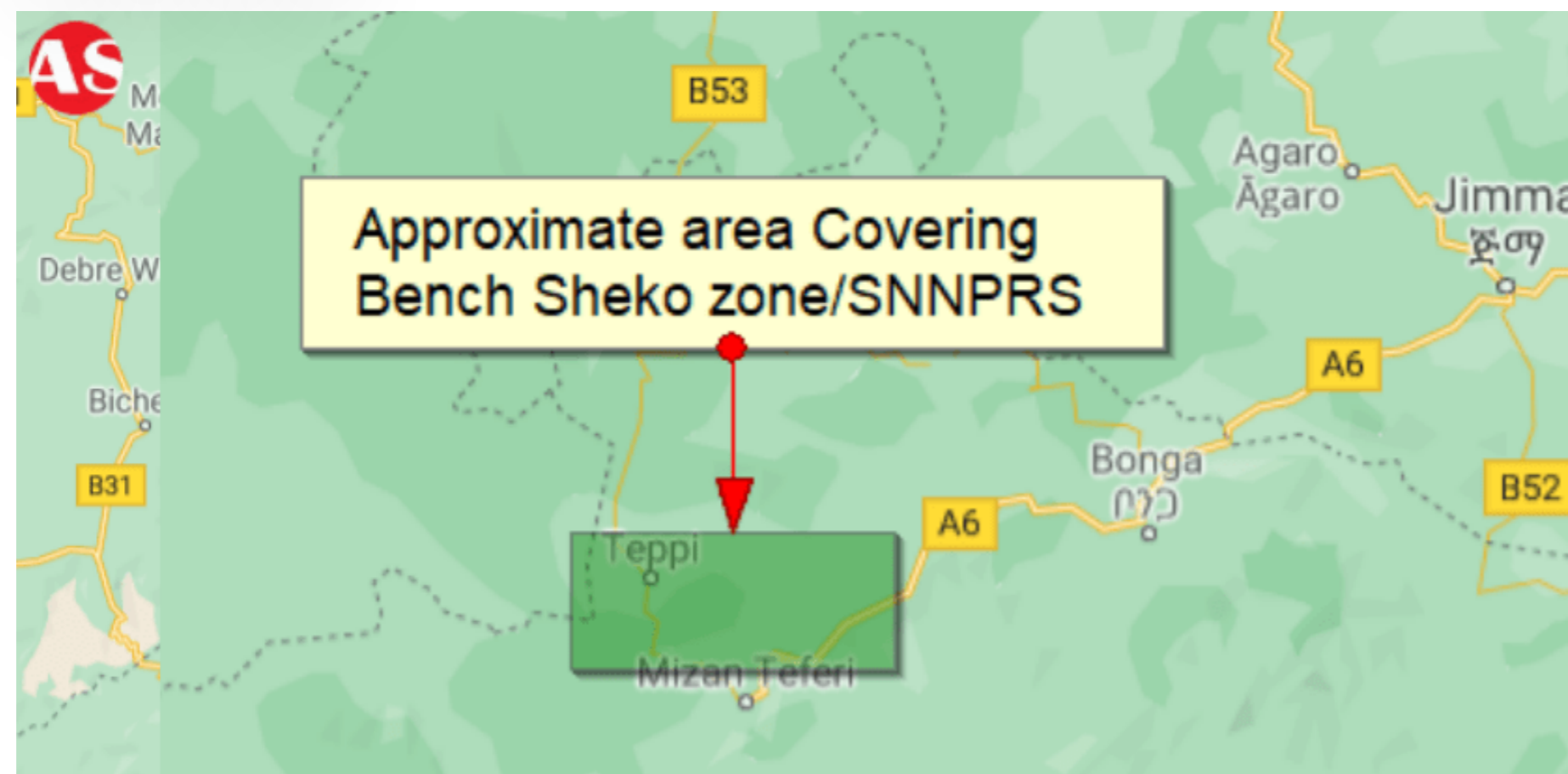


News: Security forces killed, thousands displaced in fresh attacks in Bench Sheko Zone

JUNE 8, 2021



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By Mahlet Fasil @MahletFasil

Addis Abeba, June 8, 2021- The Bench Sheko zone in Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples Region (SNNPR) experienced another bout of violence on June 4, 2021 resulting in killing of security forces and displacement of thousands of people in Guraferda Woreda. The administrator of the woreda, Sisay Shalo told Addis Standard that members of the regional special forces were ambushed by unidentified armed groups while they were on their way to fetch water.

This comes two weeks after the Bench Sheko zonal council called for regional and federal intervention. According to the statement released by the zonal council, a total of 151 people have died in recurring violence in the zone. 28 security forces lost their lives and 29 security forces were rendered disabled in the attacks as stated by the council. About 21, 938 people were displaced while more than 732 houses were destroyed in Sheko, Guraferda and South Bench woredas, the council said. Sisay said that anti-terrorism forces and federal police officers were deployed to the area following the request but it wasn't enough to quell the attacks. Three police officers and six special police officers were killed by unknown forces in Sheko Woreda, Bench Sheko Zone, Aybera and Sanka Kebeles in mid May.



News: Bench Sheko Zone Council calls for regional, federal intervention amid recurring violence

The 8th annual, 4th round, 3rd emergency meeting of the Bench Sheko Zonal Council Credit: Bench Sheko Zone communications By Siyanne Mekonnen @Siyaanne Addis Abeba, May 25/2021 – The zonal council of Bench Sheko Zone held the 3rd emergency meeting of its Fourth round, Eighth ... Continue reading

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Following the killing of the security forces, the armed groups burnt houses in Gabita and Semarta Kebeles. An eye witness told DW Amharic that the residents received the information about the attack prior to its occurrence. The eye witness also said that about 4000 people were displaced after the attack. The head of peace and security bureau of Guraferda woreda, Workineh Eshetu attributed the attacks to unnamed forces backed by TPLF. He also hinted at a possible excursion from South Sudan borders.

Speaking on the conditions of IDPs, the administrator of the Bench Sheko zone told Addis Standard that they are sheltered in three centers; schools in Alanga and Huja Kebeles and Biftu woreda center. He put the total number of IDPs after the most recent attack at 15,120 including from kebeles where the attacks didn't occur, noting that the number doesn't include the displaced people following Friday's attack. "Some of them fled their homes in the anticipation of attacks," Sisay said, adding, "There are women and children among them." The IDPs are from Gabita, Semerta, Sefera, Kana'a and Kukiya kebeles, according to Sisay, who added that IDPs are returning to their homes in Kana'a and Kukiya kebeles. "Both zonal and woreda administrations are working to rehabilitate the IDPs and provide aid with the help of the federal government." AS

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